

My name is Deirdre Elvis-Peterson and I am writing in support of HB0066, Licensed Direct-Entry Midwives – Previous Cesarean Section.

As a birth consumer in Maryland I have experienced birth in 3 different ways. My chosen provider has always been midwives. My 1st child was born in a Birthing Center. This was our intention with our 2nd but I ended up needing a caesarean section with him. When the midwife came to check on me the day after my son's birth I was informed that future labor and delivery would have to be in a hospital because Birth Centers could not perform VBACs at their location. I was devastated. I have NEVER chosen hospital birth and did not want to be forced to do so. I began to do research about VBACs and found that there was little risk of complications from VBAC. When I became pregnant again however, a "secretive" homebirth would be my only option. It was extremely difficult to locate a midwife willing to help me (in 2010). Thankfully I did find one and my 1st VBAC was a beautiful success.

More women need this option available to them in Maryland. Women should not be forced to be hospitalized to have their VBAC. Direct Entry Midwives are more than capable of helping women have safe and successful VBACs. I have had three VBACs and they have all gone wonderfully and I am grateful to the women who helped me. It would be even better if women of Maryland had this option and midwives could help them unhindered.

VBAC is a safer choice than repeat c-section which can have a myriad of complications both immediately and long term. So please support HB66 and give women the FULL right to choose where and with whom they have a VBAC.